

UC Santa Cruz

Publishing Tips Series Season 2

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Publishing Tips Series – Season 2, Week 6

December 4, 2025

This is the sixth and last week of the Publishing Tips Series, Season 2, and this second season runs from October 23 to December 4, 2025. This week's installment covers "**How can I develop a publishing plan for my articles?**" Here are this week's takeaways:

- Plans or strategies for publishing can be article-specific or cover your time in your graduate program more broadly.
- A publishing plan or strategy can help with the mental load of graduate school by mapping out when you will pursue publishing and the steps to get there.

Spotify link to listen

[Season 2, Week 6 podcast episode](#) (same content as the following text-based version, only in audio format)

How can I develop a publishing plan for my articles?

Welcome to the last week of Season 2! Let's talk about a publishing strategy.

You may not have a plan or strategy when you are starting out – no worries! This week's installment/episode will cover two possible approaches, and you can use either or both:

- (a) a plan for writing a single article by a specific date, or
- (b) an overarching publishing strategy that looks at what parts of your research will become articles and when, from now through the end of your time in graduate school.

The latter is my recommendation for mapping out your publishing goals in graduate school, but the former may be more immediate when you have scholarship or results that you want to publish soon and are ready to write about them.

Plan for an Individual Article

A plan for an article involves project management. This plan outlines when to do what tasks for your article up to the date when you intend to submit your article to your chosen journal. Wendy Belcher's book, [Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks](#), not only walks you through the steps to take but also provides guidance on them in two disciplinary tracks depending on the type of research you do. However, Belcher expects that authors have a draft or an outline at the very least to go through her process.

With or without Belcher's book, you can plan out over the course of weeks or months when you will write, establish your argument, find a journal, get feedback on your draft, revise your manuscript, and prepare to submit. Give yourself some cushion for things that come up, like other work, travel, and holidays.

Charting out a plan over the course of a few months (or more) for drafting and submitting your article may or may not work for you. Writing and submitting an article is an endeavor with many steps, though, and sometimes breaking down the steps and doing a little bit on most days can help it feel more manageable. Doing so can also take away that feeling of needing to always do more when you have completed your planned task for the day or week so you can check it off the list and walk away.

Yeah, yeah, that all sounds perfect but maybe not realistic! I get it. This year, I started out in January following Belcher's 12-week program for an article with the intention to submit an article by the end of the subsequent three months. Yet, I was sidetracked by preparing for a conference presentation in March that I presented in April. In May, I returned to working on the article. By the end of June, I was able to submit the article. So, it was not done in 12 consecutive weeks, but I was also intentional about writing it and it took well under a year.

While 12 weeks may seem somewhat arbitrary, pick what works for you. Even if you get off track, you can resume and adjust at any time. In fact, sometimes time away from an article gives you clarity when you return to working on it, so interruptions are not all bad. Guilt may eat at you, but guilt does not have to drive – it is reasonable to say that you are focusing on something else important and will get back to your publishing plan on a future date. Also, one of the reasons why rejection, which we talked about in [Episode 5](#), is so disappointing is the time invested. Authors spend so much time writing, and then they wait for peer review only to find out that the article is rejected. For this reason, it is best to be flexible about whatever timeline that you decide on, or build in wiggle room, in case you receive a rejection from a journal, have to submit to multiple journals, and/or have to spend a lot of time on revisions.

One note about drafting and submitting: It can be hard to tell **when an article is ready for submission**. Some authors spend a lot of time making sure their manuscript is as clear and error-free as possible (ahem, me!). Some authors create a draft, call it good, and submit that rough draft, figuring that peer reviewers will comment on errors, missing information, etc. It is up to you on how you approach it – there is probably a happy medium between agonizing over a

draft and submitting something so error-ridden that it is immediately rejected. Not letting perfect be the enemy of the good is something I have been embracing lately!

Publishing Strategy

Switching gears, a publishing strategy looks instead at the larger picture of publishing during your time in graduate school. This strategy includes articles but is broader than article-level. The goal is to create an individual, intentional path to publishing the articles that you need in order to graduate, be competitive on the job market, and/or fulfill your publishing goals.

Everyone's publishing strategy will look unique. You may consider these questions to develop your strategy and map it out how you see best (on paper, in a doc, etc.):

- How many articles do I need (and/or want) to publish during my graduate program?
- In the next few years as a graduate student, which parts of my research/scholarship might I publish?
- When would I like for each article to be published? Do articles need to be a part of my dissertation or thesis, or do I have flexibility with the timing of publication?
- What journals would be good for each article? What are my second and third choice journals if my article is not accepted in my first choice journal?
- Do I have more research to do before I can reach the point of writing and submitting a manuscript to a journal, and what is that timeline? When will the research be completed so that I can write about the findings?
- What is a realistic timeline for writing an article amidst my other responsibilities, both professional and personal? What else is going on [next year/next summer/next quarter] when I have my data/results/findings and am ready to write?
- What can I do to support my publishing strategy? Publishing-adjacent activities include keeping up with new literature in the field, checking out journals where articles you like are published, writing up the methods or working on a preliminary literature review, and going to conferences, among other things.
- Can I build in a cushion of time for article revisions after peer review? Do I need a cushion for other things, whether professional or personal?
- Do I plan to write a book at some point, and how can I work towards that?

These are only some of many questions to consider when developing your plan for how, when, and where to publish.

This strategy can be adjusted as needed but will help with being intentional about publishing with the time, availability, and responsibilities that you have. Are you taking some time off,

whether expected or not? Push the dates back for when you want to write an article or submit it. Did an opportunity come up that will be great for your research or experience but reduces your bandwidth for writing? Extend your timeline, but spend smaller amounts of time on writing so that you still make progress.

What if this kind of plan or strategy doesn't work for me? That's fine, too! Every author has their own approach to writing and publishing. I am sharing these ideas for a publishing plan for your article and strategy for grad school in case it resonates with you as a way to alleviate stress, evaluate your bandwidth that you can dedicate to publishing, and look ahead so that you don't have to write three articles at once to include in your dissertation in year five in order to graduate (unless you want to!). As an author, you have the autonomy to choose the writing practice that works for you and helps you feel confident.

Putting it into practice

Each week we will have a few things to read or try. For this week:

1. Look at resources for writing articles and publishing to break down the steps into manageable chunks or learn about steps that you are unfamiliar with. For example, Belcher offers [solutions to common academic writing obstacles](#) on her website, and Paltridge & Starfield cover [Getting Published in Academic Journals](#) in an ebook.
2. Talk with your advisor or committee members who have been in your position of starting out with publishing as a graduate student. They may be able to help you develop realistic plans and timelines for publishing.

More questions? Contact the Library at research@library.ucsc.edu or [sign up](#) for a one-on-one Zoom meeting about publishing.

Thank you for joining Season 2 of the Publishing Tips Series!

Best wishes,

Martha Stuit

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